of CIRM) under RLC(C) Dhanbad and were more than three months old as on 31/3/98. Of these FOC reports, 187 have since been disposed off. These Industrial Disputes were raised by individuals and Unions functioning in the Coal, Railway and Banks Industries;

(b) As on 31.3.98, 16 Industrial Disputes were pending due to non-submission of FOC Reports within 3 months as the RLC(C) Dhanbad;

(c) 22 proposals for prosecution have been submitted by RLC(C) Dhanbad for approval to the Government as on 31.3.98;

(d) 24 prosecution cases are pending in the Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Dhanbad for trial & disposal as on 31.3.98.

(e) and (f) Due to heavy intake of FOC reports, there has been some delay in the final disposal. Every possible effort is made to quicken the pace of disposal of FOC Reports and the delay has considerably been reduced during the recent past.

**Backlog of unemployment in the country**

2813. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the backlog of unemployment in the country by the end of Seventh Plan;

(b) the achievement made to generate jobs for the unemployed persons during Eighth Plan period and 1997-98; and

(c) whether a new strategy is proposed to be adopted to create additional employment in the Ninth Plan period particularly in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) The Unemployment in the country as per the Current Weekly Status, at the beginning of the Eighth Plan, was estimated to be 17.00 million. The 8th plan envisaged 8 to 9 million annual addition in employment opportunities during the period 1992—97. As per the latest survey of National Sample Survey Organisation, the addition to employment opportunities during 1987-88 to 1993-94 was 43.91 million on Usual Principal Status basis. This implies addition of 7.3 million employment opportunities per annum.

(c) The Approach to the Ninth Plan envisages priority to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty. Greater productive employment will be generated in the growth process itself by concentrating on sectors, sub-sectors and technologies which are labour intensive, in regions characterised by higher rates of unemployment and underemployment.

**Abolition of Child Labour**

2814. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA:
SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps have been taken by Government on the abolition of child labour in the country;

(b) if so, the achievement made in this regard;

(c) the State-wise position at present;

(d) the number of child labour detected from those States during last three years; and

(e) the steps taken by Government in their rehabilitation?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (e) According to the 1991 census, the number of working children below the age of 14 years is 11.28 million. Statewise distribution of working children is at statement (*See* below). Recently, in the first round of survey of working children conducted by the State Government on the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, 5,54,970 children were identified.